

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE					<i>Form Approved</i> OMB No. 0704-0188	
<p>The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.</p> <p>PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.</p>						
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 02/02/2018		2. REPORT TYPE Final Technical Report			3. DATES COVERED (From - To) December 2016 - November 2017	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Security Force Assistance: Cases and Policy				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER 5b. GRANT NUMBER N00014-17-1-2052 5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER 5d. PROJECT NUMBER 5e. TASK NUMBER 5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S) Biddle, Stephen (Principal Investigator) Berman, Eli (Co-PI)				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER 10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) ONR 11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc. 1050 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA 02138-5398				9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Office of Naval Research 875 North Randolph Street Arlington, VA 22203-1995		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; distribution is Unlimited.						
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES						
14. ABSTRACT Pls Stephen Biddle (George Washington University) and Eli Berman (UCSD) supplemented existing Deterrence with Proxies (DwP) research with three book chapters and a research article. These additional activities funded by this grant analyze security force assistance as an example of capacity building, a recent theoretical extension to the underlying DwP model. In the course of their research they discovered that an alternative to an agency model of working through proxies is a "capacity building" approach, in which support and punishment are augmented by assistance that enhances the ability of the proxy to suppress the problem.						
15. SUBJECT TERMS security force assistance, capacity building, El Salvador, South Korea, proxy, military						
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON	
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			Alterra Milone 19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code) (617) 868-3900	
UU	UU	UU	UU	6		

Final Technical Report

Distribution: Approved for Public Release; distribution is Unlimited

Date: 2 February 2018

Sponsoring organization: Office of Naval Research (ONR)

Performing organization: National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc. (NBER)

Title: Security Force Assistance: Cases and Policy

Award number: N00014-17-1-2052

Prepared for: Office of Naval Research

For the period: December 1, 2016 – November 30, 2017

Submitted by: Stephen Biddle, Principal Investigator
Eli Berman, Co-Principal Investigator

Abstract:

PIs Stephen Biddle (George Washington University) and Eli Berman (UCSD) supplemented existing Deterrence with Proxies (DwP) research with three book chapters and a research article. These additional activities funded by this grant analyze security force assistance as an example of capacity building, a recent theoretical extension to the underlying DwP model. In the course of their research they discovered that an alternative to an agency model of working through proxies is a “capacity building” approach, in which support and punishment are augmented by assistance that enhances the ability of the proxy to suppress the problem.

They responded by expanding the theoretical framework to allow capacity building in their dynamic model. Security Force Assistance (SFA) is the most explicit example of capacity building. It is the major activity of US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example. They added original research on El Salvador and South Korea to match this theoretical progress with evidence, resulting in a book chapter on each case in a book forthcoming with the Cornell University Press, an additional chapter in the same book on policy implications, two published journal articles, and various articles in the popular press.

CONTENTS

Contents	1
Technical Report.....	2
Summary	2
Investigators	2
Security Force Assistance: Cases and Policy.....	2
Background	2
Policy Implications	2
Methods, Assumptions, and Procedures	3
Results and Discussion	3
Restatement of Results.....	5
References	5
Publications	5
Popular Press.....	5

TECHNICAL REPORT

Summary

Investigators

Principal Investigator **Stephen Biddle**, is Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University, and Adjunct Senior Fellow for Defense Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Co-Principal Investigator **Eli Berman**, Professor and Chair of Economics, University of California San Diego, and Research Director for International Security Studies at the UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, as well as Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research.

Security Force Assistance: Cases and Policy

Background

A central foreign policy challenge for the U.S. is suppressing threats from multiple substate sources, such as ISIS, or international crime. Given the sheer cost and political toxicity of invading all sources of terrorist, narcotic and human trafficking, for example, the alternative the U.S. Government often chooses is “indirect control,” a strategy that engages a local ally (e.g., the Iraqi government) in suppressing a threat of mutual interest. Unfortunately, those attempts often fail. The DwP project investigates why, hypothesizing that unaligned interests of the local ally and the U.S. are more often the problem than is a lack of capacity on the part of the local ally.

This accompanying project investigates that hypothesis in the cases of South Korea in the 1950s and El Salvador in the 1990s. It also collects practical policy implications from the entire DwP research effort in to a single book chapter and a journal article (see References).

Policy Implications

The project identifies policy implications in several domains. First, it presents the theory’s implications for best practices when relying on proxies: when the United States uses this tool, how can it be done most effectively? Second, it considers when the tool should be used. What preconditions are needed for successful employment, and where are these most likely to be found? Third, it assesses how common these preconditions are, and how widely applicable a method proxy reliance is. Fourth, given this, it evaluates what the overall utility of proxy reliance as a national security option is: how powerful a tool is this, what can it reasonably be expected to do, and what can it not do? Fifth, it discusses implications of these results for U.S. force structure: to what degree can proxy reliance enable safe reductions in U.S. ground forces, changes in the design of those forces, or shifts from conventional end strength toward special operations forces or air power? Finally, the project presents a conclusion with some summary observations in light of the theory, cases, and policy implications presented.

Methods, Assumptions, and Procedures

The analytical narrative method was used to test the underlying theory --developed separately as a principal-agent model with capacity building in the DwP project. These two cases were chosen as part of a general case selection strategy that: a. defined scope conditions: subsidiarity, sufficient interest of principal and asymmetric information; b. chose cases that met those conditions; c. coded those cases on exogenous variation in variables with predictions flowing from the model; d. coded those cases on predictions; e. used within-case variation in predictors and predicted outcomes to investigate predictions of the model.

Two of those nine cases, and the policy implications were part of this subproject.

Results and Discussion

In the following section, we list the deliverables that have resulted from research, analysis, and case development, and the key findings.

1. Biddle, Stephen. "Building Security Forces and Stabilizing Nations: The Problem of Agency," *Daedalus*, Vol. 146, No. 4 (Fall 2017), pp. 126-138

Description: After fifteen years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, many now see "small-footprint" security force assistance (SFA)—training, advising, and equipping allied militaries—as an alternative to large U.S. ground-force commitments to stabilize weak states. SFA, however, confronts challenges of interest misalignment between the United States and its typical partners. The resulting agency losses often limit SFA's real ability to improve partners' military effectiveness. For SFA, small footprints usually mean small payoffs.

2. Berman, Eli, Stephen Biddle, David Lake. (forthcoming, 2018, Cornell University Press). *Proxy Wars: Suppressing Transnational Violence via Local Agents Small Wars*, Select Chapters

Description: The chapters directly related to this research project discuss the following implications for U.S. national security policy:

- Use aid to create incentives, especially via conditionality. Avoid apolitical, unconditional capacity building in all cases except those where an ally's interests align very closely with those of the United States.
- Revise formal doctrine to reflect both the importance of political interest alignment and the ubiquity of misalignment. Provide explicit doctrinal guidance on coercive bargaining with proxies where interests are misaligned, as they usually will be.
- Structure civilian aid with options for increases if proxies comply with U.S. preferences, and decreases if not.
- Seek opportunities to increase the economic value to the proxy of controlling territory the United States wants controlled (per the Naxalite example noted earlier).

- Design military assistance programs to be divisible, reversible, and contingent—and do so from the beginning. Avoid large, inflexible, unitary programs, and where necessary accept some inefficiency as the price of the flexibility needed for credible conditionality.
- Monitor intrusively and accept the increased footprint this requires, together with the opportunity cost inherent in using U.S. intelligence resources to monitor proxy compliance with U.S. preferences and their use of U.S. assistance.
- Avoid unconditional deadlines for withdrawal of assistance. Prioritize leverage over exit, and accept longer commitments when necessary to this end.
- Support publicly, threaten privately, and combine threats with promises of aid sufficient to make compliance with U.S. preferences worthwhile to the proxy.
- Seek proxies whose interests align as closely as possible with those of the United States.
- Expect incomplete results. Proxy reliance is potentially much cheaper than large U.S. troop deployments and can be effective in preserving allied governments from overthrow, but it will often be more conducive to a stalemate than to outright victory.
- Do not expect proxy reliance to enable cost- or risk-free reductions in conventional U.S. ground forces, or redesign of U.S. force structure or military posture. Such measures may or may not be needed, but increased reliance on proxies has limited potential to reduce the associated costs and risks.

Restatement of Results

- South Korea and El Salvador are considered by the U.S. military to be model cases of successful capacity building of allied forces which enable successful threat suppression.
- A closer look at South Korea in the 1950s reveals that the unconditional capacity building undertaken prior to the North Korean invasion was a failure, with the resources diverted to patronage in security forces. Only when the U.S switched to conditional assistance, and interests of principal and ally were aligned by invasion did the South Korean military professionalize, a necessary condition for repelling the threat.
- A close look at El Salvador reveals a similar failure to condition assistance or monitor compliance, resulting in the local ally making a weak effort at military and political reforms that U.S. advisors deemed necessary. The result was a stalemate in the ongoing conflict with communist-backed rebels. Threat suppression was achieved only as a byproduct of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war.

REFERENCES

Publications

Berman, Eli, David Lake (forthcoming, 2018, Cornell University Press). *Proxy Wars: Suppressing Transnational Violence via Local Agents Small Wars*, Select Chapters

Biddle, Stephen. "Building Security Forces and Stabilizing Nations: The Problem of Agency," *Daedalus*, Vol. 146, No. 4 (Fall 2017), pp. 126-138
https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00464

Biddle, Stephen, Julia MacDonald, and Ryan Baker. "Small Footprint, Small Payoff: The Military Utility of Security Force Assistance," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (2017), published online 12 April 2017
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402390.2017.1307745>

Popular Press

Biddle, Stephen. "The Trump Administration Wants to Send More Military Advisers to Afghanistan. Good Luck with That." *Washington Post*, May 15, 2017
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/05/15/the-trump-administration-wants-to-send-more-military-advisers-to-afghanistan-heres-why-that-rarely-works/?utm_term=.7bea181b4853

Biddle, Stephen. "Afghanistan Needs a Settlement, Not Another Troop-Withdrawal Deadline," *Defense One*, June 7, 2016: <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/06/afghanistan-needs-settlement-not-another-troop-withdrawal-deadline/128879/?oref=d-river>

Biddle, Stephen and Jacob Shapiro. "The Problem with Vows to 'Defeat' the Islamic State," *Atlantic Monthly* blog, August 21, 2016:
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/08/defeat-isis-containment/496682/>